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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Incidents involving date rape drugs prompt all-campus rally

by Julie Kokot '21
Staff Writer

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALEXANDRA REBOREDO '22

In response to the use of date rape drugs at off-campus events, SMART held a campus-wide demonstration on Friday; attendees were encouraged to wear black in solidarity with survivors.

TW: This article contains themes and accounts of sexual assault.

On Friday Apr. 19, several hundred members of the Hamilton community came together in front of Buttrick Hall to express their anger, grief, and frustration in the wake of multiple reports of date rape drugs — specifically, ketamine — being present at off-campus social events and the administration's response to these reports. Further, student organizers and attendees of the rally sought to call attention to broader issues of sexual assault on campus.

On Sunday, Apr. 14, Director of Campus Safety Frank Coots said that Campus Safety had "two men come in and report that friends of theirs believed that they had been poisoned by these date rape drugs." The men "came in minutes from each other" and provided "similar information about different victims so that makes it extremely unusual." That same day, Coots said he and his team contacted the New York State Police Department, specifically the investigator who deals with sexual assault on college campuses. Coots said they were also "in touch with the narcotics division of the state police because we're dealing with illicit drugs, so we thought it was appropriate to have both of them involved."

In terms of the specific date rape drug allegedly used in these incidents, Coots said, "We have received several second party reports in which the reporting person states their friend had a test completed of either their urine or blood and it came back positive for ketamine. We are going with information that is being reported to us."

The following morning of Apr. 15, at 10:17 AM, Terry Martinez, Dean of Students, sent an email to the campus community informing them of the investigation.

Two days later, on Wednesday, Apr. 17, Survivors Making Activism and Radical Transformation (SMART) — a student-led campus group — emailed the community with information about their all-campus rally scheduled for that Friday. SMART urged all students, faculty and staff to wear black and attend the rally.

Alma Bradley '21, one of the student organizers of the rally said that "students like me, Gillian Driscoll '21, Peter Case '21, and Nikki Eisenberg '21 reached out to SMART [Survivors Making Activism and Radical Transformation] to discuss the possibility of having a rally/demonstration/protest. We met with Kavya Crasta '21 and Maya Figliuolo '21 who were very interested and had expressed similar sentiments."

Case, another organizer, said that for him, the rally was "a way to address concerns about systematic cover-ups of sexual assault cases on campus and the people and motives responsible for such cover-ups. The date rape drug incidents are horrifying, but in my opinion, the more horrifying thing is the ways in which the College handles sexual assault. We cannot expect a change in campus culture if perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions."

Bradley added, "We need a broader all-campus culture of social and political activism. I think a lot of people are doing great advocacy work, but there is a lack of unity and not everyone gets involved in the amazing work being done."

At the rally, some students shared their experiences as survivors of sexual assault and misconduct. Some said that the College administration is not doing, and has not done, enough to prevent these incidents from happening.

Hannah Fink '19, President of the Womxn's Community Center, said, "I think what's frustrating is that we keep having these conversations with members of the administration across different issues, you know there are multiple cases of sexual assault and misconduct all the time on this campus."

She added that the most recent incidents are "the only issue that's getting attention, and I think where I'm getting frustrated, where maybe other people are getting frustrated, is we're having these conversations and we feel like they're not going anywhere."

Cassidy Brown '19 said, "Rape culture is permeated through violence against women being viewed as acceptable. And the way this case has been handled, specifically in the first email [from Dean Martinez], not only allows rape culture to keep existing at Hamilton but puts the responsibility of protection onto women. Hamilton is one of only three NESCACS to have a federal investigation open into how they handle Title IX cases, and they need to put all of their energy into stopping this Hamilton student."

Some students also said they feel the College is not doing enough to support survivors and victims of sexual assault and druggings. Ali Robb '19 said she has "seen less expulsions than I have suspensions, especially with repeat offenders."

In a similar vein, Joel Adade '22 expressed concern that the College is too lenient on assaulters. "There are people who can't go to Commons because the person that sexually assaulted them is there," he said.

Other students took issue specifically with the College's Title IX policies. Emily Aviles '19 said, "When we go to the Title IX office like I did, I immediately in my first meeting was told that is was more likely than not that nothing was going to happen to my abuser."

Case added: "Our Title IX system is a little bit broken in my opinion. We have people who graduated a couple of years ago who filed seven claims, their assailant was suspended for only a semester, half a year. We have people on campus right now who have four claims filed against them — we're waiting for the fifth for them to be kicked off campus. I just think that we're not in any way meeting the bare minimum. I think we're finding the loopholes that we can in order to sneak by without another federal investigation, and I think the fact that we're under federal investigation goes to show that we're not meeting the bare minimum."

When reached for comment, Dean Martinez said, "I cannot speak to cases that occurred prior to my arrival in the fall of 2017, but I can say with certainty that we do not have any student

*See **Rally**, page 2*

Administration, state police open investigation as students call for action

*From **Rally**, page 1*

currently on campus with 4 to 5 official investigations against them."

Other students expressed grief, sadness, and anger that events like these most recent incidents seem to be ingrained in Hamilton's campus culture and that not enough is done to address them by either the administration or the student body.

Aviles said, "There's a disconnect between the experiences of students who are survivors, students who are friends of survivors, who are in touch with what's going on here, and the administration. People drop out of this school because they're not safe here."

Nicole Eisenberg '21 said merely attending the rally "doesn't mean that the issue is over and doesn't mean that you show your support endlessly. You need to keep showing up."

Robb added, "If you see someone in a situation where they could be assaulted and do nothing, you are a bad person. Even if you think, 'oh X wouldn't do that' or 'it's none of my business.' If you stand by and don't intervene, you are a bad person. No excuses. Protect the people around you and they will protect you. Believe survivors and keep up the fight."

Another issue raised by attendees of the rally was the administration's immediate response to the incidents. Dean Martinez's initial email offered "steps to take when attending a party or visiting a bar," which included a list of safety precautions at social events, including, "Don't accept drinks from other people [...] Open containers yourself [...] Keep your drink with you at all times, even when you go to the bathroom [...] Don't share drinks." Some students said this response could be construed as victim-blaming and criticized Martinez for failing to fully condemn the perpetrator or perpetrators of the date rape drug incidents.

In a second email sent on Wednesday, Apr. 17, Martinez provided updates on the status of the investigation and apologized for "[falling] short of stating unequivocally" the College's intolerance of "the use of drugs to facilitate criminal acts."

Martinez added in her email,"If the perpetrator of the alleged crime is a Hamilton student, the penalty likely would be expulsion. There is no place at Hamilton for a person who engages in this type of criminal activity."

At the rally, Martinez said, "To the victims and survivors I am sorry for your pain and I understand it and I feel it. This is a very personal issue for me and I know that the letter that went out above my signature fell short of what it should have. So I want to apologize for that and take responsibility for that."

College President David Wippman also spoke at the rally. "I can appreciate your frustrations, I feel exactly as you do," he said. "I'm terribly frustrated that we are still seeing incidents of sexual assault on this campus. We want to create the best educational environment we can and that means an environment in which every student is safe. So, we have added resources to this, we are doing everything we can, we're doing everything that I think good Title IX practice calls for. Does it mean there will never be an incident? No."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEXANDRA REBOREDO '22

Students shared stories, held protest signs, expressed anger and confusion, and asked questions at Friday's demonstration.

Faculty members who attended the rally also spoke. Professor Kate Brown of the Physics Department said that upon first hearing of these incidents, "I was sad and not surprised."

Professor Joyce Barry of the Women's and Gender Studies Department said she was "sickened to discover that there could be members of our community who would drug someone without their knowledge. And I fear for the intended targets of this crime, who, most often, are young, college-age women. Although dosing someone with a date rape drug is, sadly, not a new occurrence, as a professor [...] someone who spends most of her time in the company of 18-22 year olds, who are especially vulnerable, it was disturbing."

Despite the vocal support of some faculty members at the rally, students also expressed feeling frustrated and helpless with others, who they said were not supportive. At the rally, Kim Lifton '20 said, "I'm genuinely disappointed at some of the responses from faculty. To have a faculty member say she's on the Sexual Harassment Committee and then stand up in front of my class and say 'I don't understand why a protest is necessary. I don't understand why walking out of class is necessary. What's even happening?' That was disrespectful — to say that academics come before my health."

In the aftermath of the reported incidents and Friday's rally, many questions remain. The location where the drugging reportedly took place is uncertain because, according to Coots, some students who reported an incident were at both the Village Tavern (VT,) a bar in the town of Clinton, and the Breakaway Lounge, an outdoor bar about ten minutes from campus.

However, Coots stated that he is confident that druggings occurred at Breakaway because in the initial reports made by students to Campus Safety, "Breakaway was always involved [and] the VT was only involved a couple of times."

As to the number of reported cases and victims involved in these incidents, both Coots and Martinez preferred not to share a specific number. They said they have received multiple reports from students who believe that they are victims and from friends of students concerned that their friends might be victims. Still, both Martinez and Coots confirmed that there have been at least four reported cases between the weekends of April 5-7 and April 12-14 and that not all of the known victims are women. Regarding the identity of the perpetrator, Coots said that "the State Police force can do a lot of investigation, but it always comes down to someone giving us that name."

At the rally, Anne Lacsamana, Chair of the Women's and Gender Studies Department, suggested that the College had not alerted students to possible cases involving date rape drugs dating back to February, or even prior to Winter Break, of this academic year. Coots said he was made aware of two incidents that occurred on Feb. 23 at an on-campus, student organization-sponsored event when two female Hamilton students reported that they believed they had been drugged. Coots stated that he did not publicize these incidents at that time because he was unable to confirm that date rape drugs had been involved.

Regarding this February incident, one of the students who made a report spoke to *The Spectator* about her experience, saying,"[I] had four drinks before going to the party and then I was at the party with friends for fifteen minutes and then I don't remember anything else until being in the ambulance, talking to the EMT briefly, and waking up in the hospital.

"Initially I was so angry at myself and still even it just sucks because this was a party that was in the Annex, a safe space on campus where I would think I should feel safe accepting a drink from a keg.

"I just wish I knew more, I wish I had been tested for anything, that the hospital staff had not just assumed that I was trashed."

The other student who reported the incident said when she went to the hospital, she was tested for cocaine, opioids, and cannabis, among other drugs, but according to her lab results, she was not tested for standard date rape drugs. This was despite both victims saying they reported experiencing symptoms associated with date rape drugs, including profuse vomiting, inability to recall any events, physical instability and difficulty breathing when they went for testing.

In a separate incident, Emily Rivito '21 chose to go to an off campus provider for medical attention, but said the options she was given were "incompetent and negligent."

"I was told to get a test would not change anything that happened that night and didn't matter," she added.

Dean Martinez said that since the demonstration on Friday, more victims have come forward and reported their stories, and more friends of victims have come forward to express concern on their friends' behalf.

A survivor, who is not one of the four confirmed by Dean Martinez and Coots, said she chose not to report her experience to Campus Safety but shared with *The Spectator* that she is positive she was drugged and that she has friends who believe they were drugged as well. She says that at the Village Tavern on the night of Friday, Apr. 6 , "My friend had bought me a drink and I was sipping on it while talking to her. It was my third drink of the night.

"I was fine and then all of a sudden this guy next to me started talking to me. I recognized him as someone I knew from last year. He was staring at my drink, staring at me, I knew that I was losing feeling in my limbs but I told him I wasn't interested and it wasn't okay. The next morning I woke up in just an oversized T-shirt, I wasn't wearing anything except the shirt, had bruises on my neck and chest."

The College has opened its own investigation into the recently reported cases and has partnered with the New York State Police to conduct a further criminal investigation. The lead investigator of these cases is Chad Chevrier of the New York State Police. When reached for comment, Investigator Chevrier said he could not answer any questions for this article or comment on the status of the investigation as it is open and ongoing.

Jonina Mignon '21 provided additional reporting for this article.

7 Days of Green: Hamilton Sustainability Coordinators host first-ever Green Week

by Duncan Freeman '22
Staff Writer

This Saturday, Apr. 20th, the Hamilton Sustainability Coordinators (HSC) kicked off their first-ever Green Week. This week coincides with Earth Day on Monday, Apr. 22nd and was created as a "celebration of our beautiful planet," according to the Green Week official calendar. HSC hopes to highlight the focus on sustainability and environmentalism that Earth Day brings for one day and extend it into an entire week.

The week started with a farmers market featuring locally-sourced mushrooms, fresh honey, and local ice cream sellers along with student tables, which were focused on recycling and sustainability education. Student Assembly Sustainability Liaison Mike Mubarak '21 said that "the idea behind the farmers market was to encourage students to buy food locally and to encourage that culture for when students leave Hamilton." Although it is "difficult to get off campus" and buy local food, Mubarak feels that the farmers market can "set the standard" for student food habits.

The weekend continued with a field trip to Rogers Environmental Education Center for outdoor yoga Sunday morning, followed by reforesting a large section of Hamilton's golf course. Around 30 students participated in this reforesting effort and planted over 400 trees in an older section of the course in the hopes of making Hamilton a more carbon-neutral campus.

On the replanting effort, Mubarak said, "When we do have big events like this we do have big turnouts and we're really happy for that [...] but it's really everyday practices that we're trying to get people to improve on."

Composting, recycling, shorter showers, eating less meat, and turning the lights off when you leave the room are some of these everyday practices that HSC encourages. Composting will be a focus in the coming months as the College recently signed a deal with the Solid Waste Authority, which will extract methane from compost to burn as a natural gas that powers a nearby recycling facility.

Green Week continued with Earth Day celebrations on monday and 25 percent-off drinkware at the College's Bookstore with the goal of prompting students to use less paper and plastic cups. HSC encourages the community to use reusable drinkware as a means of reducing waste.

On Tuesday, HSC hosted a discussion in Commons and an environmentally-themed trivia night in the Little Pub. These discussions helped students understand more about Hamilton's sustainability practices and the College's environmental outlook.

On Wednesday, HSC worked with students to measure Hamilton's waste per day. This number was calculated by food waste from Commons and McEwen between 11 AM and 1 PM. The data gathered can be used to set a variety of benchmarks for waste and is helpful when analyzing Hamilton's environmental impact.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HAMILTON SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATORS

On Sunday, as part of HSC's Green Week, students planted over 400 trees in old sections of the College's golf course.

Later in the day, HSC hosted a panel titled "The Road Ahead for Climate Action in New York." The panel discussed ways that students can get involved in pushing for climate reform and justice in New York State. This is especially relevant with the New York State Legislature currently debating different environmental bills and initiatives.

Another panel led by students will take place on Thursday, Apr. 25 and will focus on how race and identity relate to environmental issues. Later that day, HSC and Hamilton Environmental Action Group will host a letter-writing campaign for the New York State legislature.

Green Week will conclude with a walk in Rogers Glen, which was improved over the summer. According to Mubarak, the Glen was "a dump" before the cleanup and adds that HSC wants to show students all the work that has been done.

Ultimately, Mubarak says HSC hopes that Green Week can show students "how small things can have a huge impact [...] in order to create an environment of awareness and thoughtfulness towards the environment."

Healthy Minds Survey gauges mental wellness of community

by Ben Westcott '20
Staff Writer

Hamilton College recently began conducting a campus-wide survey about student health and well-being called the Healthy Minds Survey. The survey is administered by the Healthy Minds Network (HMN). HMN is a multidisciplinary team of scholars from a variety of fields, including education, medicine, and psychology, and is based at the University of Michigan and Boston University. Since its national launch in 2007, over 180 colleges and universities have used the Healthy Minds Survey, with over 200,000 total survey respondents.

HMS is one of the only annual surveys on college and university populations that focuses exclusively on mental health and related issues. The study has a special emphasis on understanding service utilization and health-seeking behavior, including factors such as stigma, knowledge, and the role of peers and other potential gatekeepers. The study also allows colleges and universities to examine how mental health symptoms predict academic outcomes (GPA and retention).

The survey was last offered to Hamilton students during the 2015-2016 academic year. At that time, 828 students responded. 34 percent of respondents were students of color, and 16 percent of respondents identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Because HMS is a nationally normed survey, it allows Hamilton administrators to better understand how the mental health of its student population compares with a national sample, and gives the Hamilton community insight into the overall wellness of its student population over time. The survey also allows the Counseling Center to better understand Hamilton students' utilization of mental health related services and their awareness of the different services offered.

"You want to track over time shifts and changes in the population," said David Walden, Director of Hamilton's Counseling Center. "You want to do a survey, and then implement some changes in your system, and then survey again, to see what the impact is."

There have been many changes in the administration's approach to student mental health since the Healthy Minds Survey last ran three years ago.

One of these changes is Hamilton's engagement in a consultation with the JED foundation, a non-profit organization that strives to protect emotional health and prevent suicide for teens and young adults in the U.S. The College's consultation with JED has led to adjustments in how it approaches student wellness on a systemic level.

The JED consultation has aided in placing amnesty policies on Hamilton's website and Counseling center Websites within two clicks of the website's homepage. Additionally, the JED consultation has helped school administrators launch messaging campaigns related to mental health and conduct suicide prevention and intervention training programs on campus.

The new health center, the Johnson Wellness Center, also opened this year. Psychiatric and dietician services have gone from being offered one to three days a week, and the Counseling Center has increased its staff size. Students can now get acupuncture or relax and recharge in the new Wellness Room.

David Walden hopes that the Healthy Minds Survey will help administrators better understand the effects of these recent changes as well as provide insight into what the administration can do to better address students' mental health needs on campus.

"[HMS] lets us look at the overall population and see how many students are struggling [with mental health related issues], and compare it with the counseling center data and see how many are coming in," Walden said. "It's not an exact science, but it lets us get a sense of whether there are unmet needs on campus."

HMS comes at no extra cost to the College because it is included in the JED consultation. The survey will run for a few more weeks, with results expected to be available to the Counseling Center in the summer.

On Friday's Rally

To the Hamilton Community,

Thank you for coming out on Friday. Thank you for making your voices heard. Thank you for warming my cold, cynical heart by showing me that we are not as apathetic as I assumed. Thank you to everyone who wore black. Thank you to the faculty who allowed students to leave class to join in the demonstration. Thank you to the students who left class regardless.

The whole experience was overwhelming. The passion and conviction with which protestors spoke was moving, inspiring, and brave as anything. I am happy that there are so many people who feel strongly about affecting change, and I am glad that we could show the Hill that we as a community will not stand in silence and accept sexual misconduct on this campus.

As we move forward, I urge those who came out to protest to channel your anger into meaningful action. Airing grievances in a public forum was an invigorating exercise, and it is absolutely essential for us to keep that spirit going not just through the end of the semester, but through the coming years.

Frankly, the chances of us changing the way the Title IX office operates, curbing sexual assault numbers, and increasing reporting rates significantly are fairly slim. The only chance we have to make a difference on the Hill is to work hard and support each other every week, not just one Friday in April. We have to work with the school because they hold all of the cards in this situation. Hamilton is a massive institution with a $1 billion endowment and we are a bunch of pissed off 20-somethings with a megaphone. This is an uphill battle that demands continuous work and thoughtful, careful discourse. If everyone who came out on Friday put that much passion into fixing sexual assault on campus every week of the school year, into doing policy work with the administration, into supporting and sustaining survivor support groups, into policing our peers in all situations, on or off campus, our slim chances at success would grow exponentially.

Keep the pressure on.

Sincerely,
Peter Case '21
Editorial Editor

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Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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Letter to the Editor: "Why do *West Side Story*?"

"The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers."

-James Baldwin

Dear *Spectator* Editorial Board,

Soon after *Hamlet* closed last spring, I chose *West Side Story* as my next production. It was the very first play I had ever seen; I was in the 6th grade and I cried like a baby! A colleague asked me, "Why do *West Side Story*?" This simple, yet powerful, question has stayed with me throughout the entirety of the rehearsal process: "Why do West Side Story?"

Based on Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, *West Side Story* is at its core a love story. When it was first produced in 1957, it was a ground-breaking production not only for its original score, but for the diversity in its casting. With a focus on the Shark gang being primarily recent Puerto Rican immigrants, the sight of a Broadway cast that included over 20 actors of color, at that time in our nation's history, was a unique event. Although both Jerome Robbins and Leonard Bernstein had by this point established a solid track record in representing progressive racial issues on stage, advocating for racial justice through performance, *West Side Story* isn't without issues when viewed through a contemporary prism. While the Sharks are meant to be primarily Puerto Rican, there is no mention of Puerto Rican culture anywhere in the script and many of the actors in the original cast of the movie were required to darken their faces with make-up as there were only two Puerto Ricans in that cast.

So, why attempt to present a play with such a problematic history, in 2019 when our sensitivities and norms are much different? Why do *West Side Story*? Theatre, since its inception, has been used to highlight social issues, to address difficult issues such as racism and sexism, to articulate the hopes and dreams of its citizens and to tell stories. At the forefront of this have been actors who are tasked with telling other people's stories, sometimes representing other cultures, ethnicities, and genders. Within the Theatre Department at Hamilton College, we routinely break many boundaries with our casting choices as a way of broadening our theatrical offerings, of being more inclusive, of telling a more relevant story to the community at large. When we do so, we do so with a heavy emphasis on research, which allows the actors to portray and represent a three-dimensional character, not a stereotype. With color conscious casting, this production of *West Side Story* adheres to these principles and stands as the most diverse cast ever presented at Hamilton College on the theatre main stage in its two-hundred- and-seven-year history.

Why do *West Side Story*? Since 2015, the conversation about immigration in this country has taken on a decidedly xenophobic tone and many who look or sound "different" have been viewed or treated as the "other." We ask questions within this updated version of *West Side Story* as a way of highlighting what it is to be a part of an othered group in the United States. What is it to be a recent immigrant and viewed with suspicion? Where are these immigrants from, and why did they come to the USA? With our interpretation of *West Side Story*, we have put the emphasis on the Sharks as a group of immigrants with several ethnicities represented, including Puerto Rican immigrants. More questions arose that needed answers (again, this is the purpose of art): Who are the Jets and what does it mean to be an American? That question is heightened through our casting of the character of Tony as an African American. We have chosen to lay bare in all its sometime ugliness and pain the pressures experienced by both the Sharks and the Jets, including pressures from society, their parents, their teachers and each other as part of a gang. Membership in the Sharks and the Jets creates a sense of belonging and safety for both groups, and also a sense of the violence and vulnerability of youth.

The question still begs: Why do *West Side Story*? Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim were an iconic duo who created some of the most memorable music ever heard. They also created some of the most difficult and challenging music ever played or sung! It is through challenge and struggle that we learn best and, for all the student members of the orchestra as well as the cast of actors, all have struggled and learned, me included. The choreographers were asked to create from scratch a new contemporary movement vocabulary for this production, which generated more questions, and more challenges.

Why do *West Side Story*? At a learning institution such as Hamilton College, that prides itself on teaching critical thinking, the semester-long conversations this production has generated should make us all proud as we seek a deeper understanding of societal issues faced by many othered groups today and as we raise questions around who gets to tell these stories. We can be proud of how theatre in its truest form doesn't shy away from these issues; it instead chooses to problematize them, expose them, to make a difference through our art. With this in mind, 50 percent of the box office receipts from this production will go to Hurricane Maria relief. Finally, this production allows us to highlight a salient fact; love is not a color, nor is it reserved for a specific ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation. It belongs to us all and is the tie that binds us.

Why do *West Side Story*? Because, "The purpose of art is to lay bare the questions that have been hidden by the answers" (James Baldwin).

Peace,
Associate Professor Mark Cryer,
Theatre-Hamilton College

Not being believed: a survivor's account of injustice

by Taylor Kim '19
Staff writer

During the fall of 2017, I was sexually assaulted in my apartment while studying abroad in Washington, D.C. There's still a sense of dissonance that makes it difficult for me to relate with the "I" in that sentence. Being told by the authorities that there wasn't enough "evidence" to prosecute the assailant contributes to the confusion surrounding the "truth" of the incident.

Since the acts leading up the assault were consensual, I wasn't taken seriously as a victim. Even before going to the police, I knew that my story wasn't "strong" enough to win the case. Who was going to believe my side of what was essentially a "he said, she said" situation? If I was inviting this man over to my room, why wouldn't I have been looking for sexual activities?

The recent events related to sexual misconduct on campus have brought up memories and made me reflect on the emotional whirlwind of that time. Even now, however, I'm pretty emotionally-distanced from conversations about assault and particularly my own experience — probably my body's way of protecting myself from constantly reliving the pain. Although spiking drinks with date rape drugs isn't the same as how I was assaulted, I sense that the same underlying debate exists.

Who should we believe? How do we move forward in punishing the guilty and bringing justice for victims? What will happen to these people — often cisgender, straight, white men — if we falsely prosecute and discipline them?

I don't know the right answer because falsely accusing someone of sexual assault could have potentially lifelong damaging effects. However, I personally am more prone to err on the side of those making the accusation. It is well known that — more often than not — it is the victim and not an innocent person who has been accused that suffers and is denied justice. When victims aren't believed, the trauma hits again and cuts in a new way.

Questioning my assault made me question my sanity. Was I looking for it? Was I inviting assault into my life? Was it my fault? The police denying the criminality of these acts reduced the sense of power I had over my own body.

Not only was my body and my sovereignty violated, but so was the legitimacy of my word and judgement. It's like I was being gaslighted. My experience and disappointment with the D.C. Metro Police made me want to scream, "Why do people not believe me?" The attacker didn't believe me when I told him no and the police don't believe that I told him no, which makes me believe that there was no harm done, only an unfortunate situation that people lack the power to make judgement over.

Regardless of how the administration responds to the students who have been calling for action on this issue, my own personal response is one of rage and hopelessness. The College has an appalling history with dealing with rapists and sexual assailants and so I don't have much hope that administrative response will improve or even remotely satisfy our calls for justice.

My only hope is that the administration errs on the side of the victims because the last thing someone needs is to be told by authority that the violation they experienced is overshadowed by the desire to protect the accused. Why is it that when black men are caught with cannabis, they are locked away in jail for decades, but when someone is caught sexually assaulting another human, the assailant's civil rights are top priority?

We need to rethink our priorities and examine what messages we are subliminally sending through our actions, or lack thereof. The slow movement of the administration signals to the student body that they prioritize the reputation of the College over the safety and well-being of students.

And to those who spiked drinks, how dare you extend your privilege onto another person's body? How dare you believe you own other people?

And to students who know who the perpetrators are, please come forward and name names. Not doing so is a reflection of your own cowardice and compliance. Do you want to live with the guilt of not coming forward and doing the right thing, or do you want the supposed loyalty and love of your perpetrator friends? We cannot rely on the administration to do the right thing so the least we can do is advocate for each other.

The student loan debt crisis in the U.S.

by Tiffany Lopes '21
Staff Writer

Many students on campus have first-hand experience with the mounting pressure of student loans. They may seem harmless when you're 17 years-old and searching for a steady way to cover college expenses, but the continued inflation of student loans now constitutes a nation-wide crisis.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York recently released a report stating that outstanding balances rose over 500 percent between 2003 and 2018. The report found the total amount of student debt to be a whopping $1.5 trillion. In 2017, Student Debt Relief, a private corporation specializing in student loans, found that the average debt-per-graduate was $28,500. With the increasing threat that this debt poses to students, we must question where our society should draw the line between the value of a college education and the threat it poses to students' financial future.

To understand how this issue affects graduating students, it's vital to understand the root of its cause. According to Yahoo Finance, the vast majority of student loans were made by banks and private lenders. These loans were, in turn, guaranteed by the Federal Government, given that the majority of borrowers have limited credit history. The government's guarantees also ensure that, regardless of the relatively-low value of most loans and the restricted repayment options, banks will be repaid.

The growing cost of college parallels students' needs for larger loans. The College Board reports that the average cost of tuition rose to $35,830 in 2018 — more than twice the amount that college students paid forty years ago. The higher cost in tuition leads students to take out larger loans, which leads to more profit for the system that lends them. The problem here is that, while the amount of student loans has tripled in less than a decade, the infrastructure of the loan system providing them remains generally the same and is therefore unable to properly address the persisting debt problem.

The student debt crisis is even more alarming at historically-black colleges and universities, otherwise known as HBCUs. In 2017, a *Wall Street Journal* analysis of Department of Education data found that graduates of these institutions were confronted with about $29,000 in debt on average — around 32 percent higher than the amount that graduates at public and nonprofit universities face.

The disparity becomes even more apparent when comparing student repayment rates. HBCUs account for only 5 percent of the total four-year institutions in the U.S., yet make up more than 50 percent of the 100 schools with the lowest three-year student loan repayment rates. The Federal Reserve reports that black families have the lowest average household income of all major racial groups in America, which could partially explain why the amount of student debt is exponentially higher at HBCUs, among other factors. This troublesome statistic depicts the increasing difference in student debt between racial groups, further illustrating the disparities present in the current student loan system.

College students vary in their awareness of the extremely negative consequences student debt can have on their ability to finance their future. Years may pass before graduates begin to even scrape the surface of covering their outstanding loans, adding to the frustration of repaying a five-figure debt statement on top of covering personal expenses. With limited repayment plan options, the problem becomes even more frightening, as it confines graduates to following a defined and profitable system.

Issues around the handling the student debt crisis in the U.S. have been repeatedly discussed by candidates in the lead up to the 2020 election; while some believe the solution lies in free tuition, others support a provision that regulates the amount of federal aid that students can receive. The discussion of finding solutions to this issue is a pressing one; far too many graduates suffer under a crippling mass of debt.

By focusing on the mechanics of the student loan system, attending to the particular groups that are most affected, and teaching students and alumni the financial tools to facilitate their ability to cover their student debt, we can begin to meaningfully address and minimize the severity of this issue.

To the 33%: an open letter to the Class of 2023

by Bryce Fan '20
Opinion Contributor

As an Asian American, I'm often asked the same question by prospective students of color: "So, what's it like?"

No more words are necessary. There is an unspoken language amongst students of color here — an understanding that questions like these are undeniably rooted in a racial context. Because, as one of the whitest colleges in the nation (according to the Office of Admissions, only 33 percent of the accepted students in the Class of 2023 identify as students of color,) students of color have a radically different experience here at Hamilton: our impressions of College Hill are shaped by the color of our skin and the cultures that raised us, cultivating that palpable sense of foreignness a lot of us felt — and still feel — the moment we stepped foot on this campus for the very first time.

When it comes to racial diversity, it's common knowledge that Hamilton paints a picture vastly different from the America that is. Here, your classes will be filled with students who graduated from elite New-England prep schools and participate in discussions with the confidence that they've figured out the world. Your closest friends will likely be the one or two students of color you meet in your intro-level classes or orientation trips. And if you come from a diverse community like me, you'll find it especially difficult to create meaningful connections with the overwhelming number of white peers around you, who are blinded by the privilege of membership in the majority. That newest meme on #SubtleAsianTraits or that popping Boba trending on Facebook? Yup, not a conversation starter here.

At a place where we are the unabashed minority, I can say with a reasonable degree of certainty this: come to Hamilton, and you'll discover what it feels like to be an outsider. And if you come to College Hill expecting an environment in which your background will be nurtured through cultural organizations that boast meaningful camaraderie, you're in for a surprise. Because even as the leaders of those organizations will tell you, the sheer lack of students of color here makes it difficult to create a tight-knit community that transcends the need for organized meetings.

I don't mean to articulate that Hamilton is an unusually hostile environment for students of color — fellow New England liberal arts colleges don't fare too well on the diversity card either. But still, that innocent ignorance — the idea that many Hamilton students are simply unaware of the struggles students of color here face everyday precisely articulates the extent to which we feel like outsiders.

And yet somehow, I still love Hamilton with all my heart.

This is the place that brought me friendships I'll cherish forever, helped me make sense of what I want to do with my life, and introduced me to the wonders of a BLT on panini (with pesto, of course.) How does one reconcile these two seemingly contradictory positions?

Well, I tell prospective students of color to come to Hamilton for one simple reason: to grow. Because three years later, through the highs-and-lows of navigating a predominantly-white institution as a student of color, I know I have.

You see, most of us come to Hamilton in search of a world-class liberal arts education, one that, true to the College's motto, will grant us the sacred opportunity to begin the journey of "know[ing] thyself." In many ways, Hamilton does a pretty darn good job of fulfilling that promise. The open curriculum trusts us to discover our passions and develop them into professional interests. The challenges of four years away from home pushes us to make friends and navigate the awkward social scene of college. But for us students of color, it presents an opportunity like no other. Above all else, my three years at Hamilton have taught me that to know thyself — to truly embrace the challenges of better understanding one's own identity — requires the discomfort that will push you to discover yourself in ways that the comfort of home never can. And as challenging and scary as that proposition may seem, it's a life-changing opportunity afforded only to students like us, who come from backgrounds that have always lived in the shadows of the majority. Not every high school senior finds the audacity to tackle that challenge head-on — and it will fundamentally distinguish your college experience from the rest of the pack forever.

When I was choosing colleges, my dad would always remind me that undergrad is a time to try new things. It's cliched because it's true. Three years later, despite the initial hesitation of committing to a school that felt worlds away, I think of all the new things I've tried at Hamilton for the first time: ice-skating (sorry to the stranger I plowed through freshman spring,) squash (shoutout to Kinger, who teaches the best P.E. class at Hamilton,) chicken riggies (you tried, Commons,) kayaking amidst the Adirondacks, walking to class in the snow...but all of these firsts pale in comparison to what I thank Hamilton the most for giving me: an opportunity to really grow. Central New York's dismal Asian food scene resulted in more phone calls back home to try my hand at some family recipes. A small minority community pushed me to escape the comfort of Asian friends and fail miserably (but happily) at a BLSU salsa night, connecting with other students of color who were going through similar difficulties. And much to my mother's happiness, a rural location pushed me to actually relish studying at the breathtaking doorsteps of the Adirondacks. Had I gone to a larger school back West, I doubt I'd have these valuable experiences under my belt — moments that, no matter how unsettling they may have been at first, have helped me grow in all the right ways.

It's certainly true that Hamilton is slowly making progress. Programs like the Multicultural Peer Mentoring Project gave me friends and mentors for life. The Diversity and Access Recruitment Team has been making important strides to expand representation in the student body. Various on-campus resources are available to make for a smoother transition. And of course, you'll have incredible friends from diverse backgrounds who will be there for you in all challenges big and small. But the purpose of this piece isn't to provide solutions moving forward — it's to articulate the reality of the community you'll find if you choose to come here next fall. Besides, resources are no substitute for the intangible sense of isolation many of us still feel.

Hamilton has helped me grow in a way that no other school could, precisely because it's been a rocky and uncomfortable journey. And if you choose to come here next fall, I hope you'll be prepared for the challenges that'll come — and embrace them — because at the end of your four years, they'll help you grow and "know thyself" too.

Bachelorette & Bachelorette

Natalie Halpin '21

PHOTO COURTESY OF NATALIE HALPIN '21

Hometown: *N.Y.C.*
Home on Campus: *Bundy.*
Major: *Government.*
Turn on? *Amanda Kim and Bandana Nepal.*
Turn off? *Fan Bingbing.*
If you were a dorm which would you be and why? *Bundy Cafe and Lounge because it never has croissants.*
If you had to describe yourself as the love child of any two musicians, whom would you pick and why? *Bjork and Kate Bush because they're both dramatic and scary.*
What advertising slogan best describes your life? *She's still kidnapped!*
What's the best pick-up line you've ever used/had used on you? *Bandana Nepal can dance for 126 hours straight, can you?*
What's your type? *Amanda and boys who wear headbands.*
What are three things you cannot live without? *My co-editor Amanda,* The Spectator*, and Amanda.*
If you were any social space, what would it be? *The Student Media Room.*
If you could join one group on campus, what would it be? *Student Assembly because Amanda's kind of in it.*
What's your patronus and why? *Spaghetti Bolognese.*
If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? *I would change the font of* The Spectator's *heading to Comic Sans.*
What would you give a thumbs up? *Amanda.*
What would you give a thumbs down? *The Russian drug dealer who stole Amanda's identity.*
Who would you say is your campus crush? *Amanda.*
Who would you say is your faculty crush? *Wayne Gentile.*
What would your perfect date be? *Doing layout with Amanda!*
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? *Handing in articles the day after* The Spectator *goes to print or spaghetti bolognese.*
If you were a food, which would you be and why? *Non-commons broccoli because Amanda likes non-commons broccoli.*
Lights on or lights off? *On like Bandana Nepal's 93rd hour.*
Favorite campus study spot? *The Student Media Room.*
What was your first thought this morning? *He should really bedazzle that headband.*
What's the meaning of life? *Amanda trying to get a full box of donuts at the Dunkin' Donuts drive-through.*
Which member of Disney royalty are you? *Will Kaback.*

Amanda Kim '21

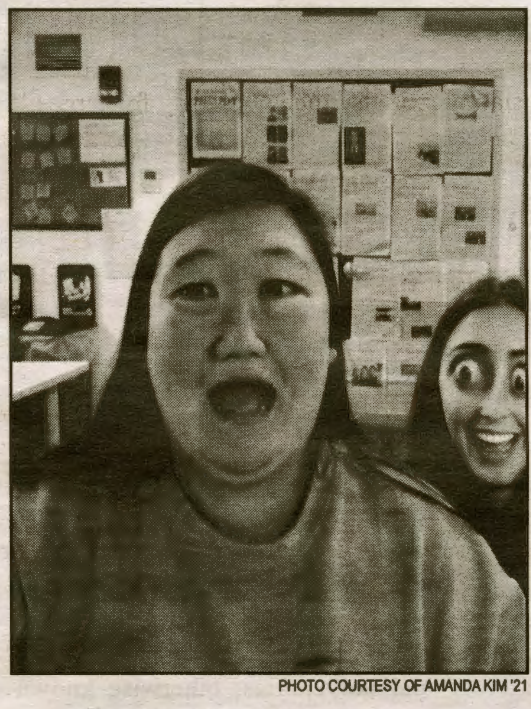

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMANDA KIM '21

Hometown: *Dallas, T.X.*
Home on Campus: *Minor.*
Major: *Psychology and Economics.*
Turn on? *People who can dance for 126 hours straight.*
Turn off? *People who cannot dance for 126 hours straight.*
If you were a dorm which would you be and why? *Bundy because no one wants me and my mental health is in shambles.*
If you had to describe yourself as the love child of any two musicians, whom would you pick and why? *PSY for the face/bod and Mariah for the personality.*
What advertising slogan best describes your life? *"Hello Boys" – Wonderbra.*
What TV genre best describes you? *Dying Earth genre.*
What's the best pick-up line you've ever used/had used on you? *"Hi my name is Natalie Halpin".*
What's your type? *Natalie Halpin and boys on scooters.*
What are three things you cannot live without? *Natalie Halpin,* The Spectator*, and my News Co-Editor.*
If you were any social space, what would it be? *The Student Media Room.*
If you could break one rule at Hamilton and get away with it, which would you choose? *Bathing in the KJ water feature.*
What would you give a thumbs up? *Natalie.*
What would you give a thumbs down? *The Russian drug dealer that hacked my Instagram.* **Who would you say is your campus crush?** *Natalie Halpin.*
Who would you say is your faculty crush? *A tenured Natalie Halpin.*
What would your perfect date be? *Wednesday at 10pm in the Student Media Room having a mental breakdown as I try to fill the News section alongside Natalie Halpin.*
If you were a food, which would you be and why? *Ravioli because it's Natalie's favorite.*
Lights on or lights off? *Strobe lights.*
Favorite campus study spot? *In Natalie Halpin's arms.*
What's the last lie you told? *I'm not thinking about that boy with the funky headband.*
What was your first thought this morning? *Where's that boy with the funky headband?*
What's the meaning of life? *Getting yelled at by a Dunkin' Donuts worker for trying to get a full box of donuts in the drive-thru.*

Relay for Remission races to fight cancer

by Maeve Sebold '22
Contributing Writer

This Saturday, Apr. 27, Hamilton's Intersociety Council will host the Relay for Remission. The event is an on-campus cancer fundraiser to benefit the American Cancer Society, Abraham House, and Light Hill. It will feature an obstacle course relay race, live musical performances, food, T-shirt sales, and raffles.

The Relay for Remission is a brand-new event. Kory Fogarty '19 created the concept and brought it to the Student Activities Board, pitching the idea at an ISC meeting.

"ISC loved the idea," said Fogarty. "They made it their main philanthropy event for the spring, and it grew from there."

Fogarty also explained the motivation that drove him to start Relay for Remission.

"I lost both my grandpa and my dad to cancer about a year and half ago and I wanted to do something in their honor," he said.

Fogarty explained that the Abraham House and Light Hill were chosen as donees "because we wanted to have a proactive and reactive response to this issue. Abraham House and Light Hill are both comfort care homes for cancer patients that are ready to pass. Light Hill was chosen because it was the house in which my father who passed away of pancreatic cancer."

After pitching the idea to ISC, Fogarty recruited fifty students to assist with planning and executing the event. They recently also collaborated with BLSU, Grilling Club, and WHCL, who all agreed to sponsor the event along with the Student Activities Office and ISC.

Fogarty says the goal is to get as many people as possible involved and make it a campus wide event. He adds that "there have been a lot of fundraisers in the past that haven't really targeted the whole school, so our hope was just to target as many different people as possible." Relay for Remission hopes to achieve this all-campus impact by combining athletics, music performances, raffles, and various associated groups and sponsors.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE RELAY FOR REMISSION

For more information on the event, check out the instagram page @relay4remission and the Relay for Remission Page on the Hamilton College Website.

The obstacle course relay race is open to all Hamilton students, faculty, and staff. It will take place on the outskirts of the rugby field and is untimed and friendly for all athletic abilities. Teams are comprised of four people, and each participant will run a section of the approximately one-mile course. The course will include hoola hoops, low ropes to crawl under, a rope swing, ropes to jump over, tires to run through, and other obstacles. Teams can register online on the Relay for Remission page on the Hamilton College website. In addition, the first 50 people to sign up for a team receive free T-shirts.

Post-race activities will be held at the Babbitt Pavilion. The student dance group HEAT and two musical guests, Wine and Diner and Otis Shanty, will perform live. The raffle will be held between the two musical performances and prizes will include gift baskets from Kaizia Martin and Clinton Pottery/Utica Coffee, as well as other gift baskets of wine, golf equipment, Air Pods, multiple gift cards to local restaurants, men's gifts, dog items, and a date themed basket.

The race will start at 12 PM and last approximately an hour-and-a-half. At 1:45 PM, HEAT will perform, followed by opening remarks from event organizers and others around 2 PM. The first band will go on at 2:15 PM, and the raffle will take place between the two musical guests. T-shirts and food will be available for purchase throughout the event.

If you do not want to participate in the race or are unable to, but would like to contribute money, donations can be made online on the Relay for Remission page on the College website.

So far, 21 teams — around 84 people — have registered, but there is still time to register to participate. Fogarty says he is pleased with the support Relay for Remission has garnered thus far, adding that it has grown into something much bigger than he expected.

From Where I Sit: Acclimating to Hamilton

Hamilton's International Perspectives Column

by Justin Madison '20
Contributing Writer

I am Justin Madison, a first generation African-American male from Miami, Florida. I am a third-year Posse scholar here at Hamilton.

Making the decision to come to Hamilton was a life-changing one that meant I would have to get used to a whole new environment and lifestyle. Prior to coming to Hamilton, I had never experienced a "real" winter or snow of any sorts, so when actually preparing to make the move as a freshman, I had to completely alter my wardrobe to be able to survive in the cold climate. The shorts and short-sleeved shirts that I was so used to would be completely obsolete in Upstate New York for six out of the eight months that I would be here.

Furthermore, getting used to travelling alone was a big change for me. When my family would travel for vacations, we would always drive. Though we travelled at least once a year for family trips, it was always by car which limited our options to more southern states like Georgia, Virginia, and South Carolina. My first time ever going on a plane to visit some place was when I visited Hamilton for Accepted Students' Day. Posse is an early decision program, so I had committed to the school in December, which is way earlier than most students. As a Posse scholar, Hamilton flew me and the nine other Posse scholars of my year to visit the school. Coming from a low altitude place like Miami that is only seven inches above sea level, seeing the mountainous terrain was quite an experience for me and my family on Accepted Students' Day.

Another challenge was meeting so many new people when I first got here. I graduated from a school of only about 200 kids, so even though Hamilton is a lot smaller than other colleges, it was 10 times as big as the school I was used to. There were so many different faces and names and it was difficult to keep up with everything because it felt like every day of my first semester I met someone new. The difficulty of meeting new people was lessened by the different cultures and people I have been able to meet during my three years here at Hamilton. Miami is very rich in different types of cultures such as Caribbean, South American, and Central American. My best friends back home are Brazilian, Haitian, and Venezuelan. I have been able to diversify my friend group even more here at Hamilton because am able to meet people from states very different from mine like Oklahoma and Alaska. Additionally, I have also been able to make friends with people from other countries like Ghana and China.

IMAGE COURTESY OF JUSTIN MADISON '22

Though coming to Hamilton was a big change for me, it is an experience that I do not regret at all. I am grateful for the experiences I have had here.

'From Where I Sit' is a column dedicated to the voices of international students, immigrant generation students, and students from families where English is not spoken at home.

Steve Swenson's life of exploration

by Philip Marks '21
Staff Writer

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

On Monday, Apr. 22, Hamilton hosted Steve Swenson, one of America's most renowned Himalayan mountaineers. Swenson, in his fifth decade of climbing, gave an engaging lecture — enhanced by captivating pictures of his climbs — on his book, *Karakoram: Climbing Through the Kashmir Conflict*.

Swenson has made over 50 major expeditions around the globe, including an ascent of K2 and a solo ascent of Everest — both without supplementary oxygen. Further, he is known for his technical first ascents, many of which are based in the Karakoram mountain range in the Kashmir region, which spans parts of Pakistan, India, and China.

The Kashmir region, although home to some of the world's most magnificent peaks, is also the source of an ongoing conflict. Each of the three countries it spans claim control of the entire region, which has led to militarized borders and, as a consequence, strict restrictions for climbers. Swenson spoke of the turmoil that surrounds the region, highlighting the political strife, but also noted that as certain areas that were previously closed off to climbers begin to open up, new opportunities for first ascents arise.

His first ascent of Saser Kangri II emerged out of one such incident, as the Kashmir conflict had previously rendered the peak inaccessible. This ascent represented a monumental achievement for Swenson and his team, given that the peak was previously the second highest unclimbed mountain, after Gangkhar Puensum (which is closed off for religious reasons.) Swenson acknowledged the unique privilege of "walking in a place no one's ever been before."

While his talk was full of incredible stories — such as peeling away from his group to ascend Everest alone — and beautiful images — a lush green valley framed by two enormous mountain ranges comes to mind — there was an undercurrent to Swenson's talk which required the audience to understand his failures and appreciate the lessons he has learned in his travels. Adversity is instrumental for Swenson, who referenced his "decade of failures" in the Karakoram range that ultimately led to his first ascent there. He emphasized the many attempts required to summit each mountain, as well as the need to know one's limits as a climber. Swenson gave one anecdote about a friend, Phil Ershler, who turned around just 300 meters from the summit of K2 because he felt he wouldn't reach it by his turnaround time. He paused for a moment on another picture, saying, "One of the things I like about this picture is that everyone is still alive."

Swenson recognized his ascent of Everest as a turning point in his mountaineering career, as the "experience would change everything [he] would do afterward." He explained that he was offered a free spot on the trip by the guide who was supposed to get Sandy Pittman to the summit. Pittman gained notoriety as one of the survivors of the 1996 Everest disaster (the story behind *Into Thin Air*.) However, before that trip, she garnered a corporate sponsorship for an attempt to climb the difficult Kangshung Face, a trek which would include Swenson. He ultimately left the group when he realized Pittman was unfit for the route and the experience eventually turned him off sponsored climbing altogether. Swenson maintains that his love for "exploration had nothing to do with goals, it was about seeking the unknown." From then on, he committed himself to new, unclimbed routes where he could avoid tourists and climbers who didn't share his values.

Even now, at 65, Swenson is still climbing. He plans to head out again this June for his second attempt at another unclimbed peak in Pakistan. Now climbing with people half his age, Swenson said he feels lucky for the opportunity to continue do what he loves.

In a fitting manner, he closed his talk, and his book, with another anecdote about one of the "young guys." After they wrapped up their most recent expedition in 2017, Graham Zimmerman, an EMT, stopped to help a little boy in Pakistan who had broken his arm. Graham managed to distract the boy and put a smile on his face while fixing his arm into a splint. Swenson said that it was moments like these, as opposed to his daring summits, which provided "the inspiration to lead this life of exploration."

Mind your own business: Top 5 bathrooms on campus

by Krithika Ravishankar '22
Contributing Writer

College can be tough given the adjustment to a new environment and unfamiliar places, but along with these challenges come a seriously-overlooked matter — bladder shyness. This secret phobia affects many on campus and this article goes out to all those who need guidance on where to go for your private business.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

KTSA's second floor gender neutral bathroom takes the win from this extremely competitive field. Ample space, a large mirror, solid toilet, and efficient paper towel dispenser are key features.

1. KTSA second floor gender-neutral bathroom
This bathroom is in a perfect corner — adjacent to the Edwin Barnett Lab Theatre but private enough so you can mosey in and out with the utmost confidence. This single bathroom is all the rage: ample space, large mirror, functioning toilet, and paper towel dispenser. The lighting is suitable for all selfie-taking Hamiltonians and quick primping. KTSA can be a hike, especially for non-thespians, but it's worth the commute.

2. Sadove second floor bathroom
After buying a plethora of overpriced snacks or Hamilton swag at the Book- the Sadove bathroom is perfect for you to either cry in private over your empty wallet or actually use the bathroom. Equipped with three stalls, this bathroom is spotless, and every time I've gone in, there's always been a free stall. In short, this bathroom is dependable in case you have high level business after Diner's mac-n-cheese Wednesdays.

3. Bathroom across from the Annex (Tolles Pavilion)
If you really want some privacy and are willing to go down a dimly lit, slightly scary hallway, this is the bathroom for you. Just know that all lavatory-related facilities are there. The Annex's bathroom is perfect for walking in and out incognito.

4. Women's bathroom below McEwen
Hidden perfectly between the McEwen stairs and a janitorial closet, this Darkside bathroom is quite discreet as well. Upon entrance, you're met with a long-mirrored vanity at eye-level, perfect for resting your backpack and walking through the doorway to the toilets and sinks. You might be wondering, "Why bother mentioning this bathroom? It is not very private and commonly used by students." Just remember one thing: location, location, location! This bathroom is perfectly situated for a quick hand wash before lunch or post-lunch relief and is close to KJ or Wellin Hall so you'll be able to rush to class or back to the thrilling show you're watching.

5. Suida House — Office of Admissions bathroom
And last but definitely not the least, the Admissions bathroom. A college's admissions building is a prospective student's first glance at a school and is pivotal in shaping a positive viewpoint. Therefore, if you feel your business is bougie, go to the Admissions bathroom.

Spring Mainstage Review: *West Side Story*

by Jake Bolster '19
A&E Contributor

On Apr. 19 at 7:30 PM, the Hamilton College Theatre Department premiered its spring mainstage production, *West Side Story*, directed by Mark Cryer, to a sold-out audience in Wellin Theater.

I enjoyed *West Side Story*'s opening night for a number of reasons and emerged from the theater disheartened for a number of others. In terms of music, theatrical elements, and dance, I was in awe of the performance. I enjoy watching people my age so expertly execute a range of skills for which I have absolutely no talent, and it was doubly fun to see such a diverse, large cast do so. Chris Victor '21 as Tony and Nina Merz '22 as Maria sang and acted beautifully throughout the show, anchoring their characters in their star-crossed love for one another.

Ndanu Mutisya '21 gave a show-stealing performance as Anita, while Kenny Letts '21 as Riff and Gus Gonzalez '21 as Bernardo squared off menacingly as leaders of their respective gangs. They were backed up emphatically by standouts Adrian Summers '19 as Chino and Will Benthem de Grave '20 as Action. Portraying the show's obvious villains were Will Kaback '20 as Lieutenant Schrank and Jack Clark '21 as Officer Krupke.

In addition to Victor '21, Merz '22, Mutisya '21, and Gonzalez '21, *West Side Story* marked the premiere of many first-time mainstage performers: Lizzy Ely '21, Zeke Coleman '22, Ally Millar '21, Jay Menner '22, Rachel Lee '22, Ricardo Millien '19, Lupita Cabanillas '21, Sharon Hammer '20, Addie Amadeck '22, Grace Woolson '21, Carina Krusell '22, and Man Nguyen '22 all made impressive debuts, helping tell the story through their fierce commitment and vivacity.

West Side Story represents another departmental milestone in the unification of actor and orchestra. Accompanying the stellar cast was an equally-magnificent orchestra. This group of students executed some of the most resonant, evocative, catchy music of the 20th century with style and grace. Their music filled Wellin with all ranges of known emotions, and their performance was as central as the actors' to convey the message of the text. This production has undeniably broadened the talent pool of Hamilton's Theatre Department, which means future productions can tackle new plays and subject-matters with a wider range of actors in tow. Whether or not you're a member of, or interested in, Theatre at this school, I hope you take my word for it when I say this feat is something worth celebrating.

The show's production elements — though hampered by a few hiccups opening night (not uncommon for productions' first runs in earnest) — were excellent. The set, designed by Visiting Assistant Professor of Theatre Sara Walsh, ergonomically and expressively communicated New York City, and its malleability and minimalistic design added depth and texture to every scene. I particularly enjoyed the backdrop as it effortlessly communicated both a skyline and a neighborhood for the action. The projections, designed by Jeff Larson, were perhaps my favorite part of the show. The projections across the back wall and the scrim on the island tied the world of the play together.

Not to be outdone by set and projections, the show's costumes subtly added to the message of the piece; the Sharks' color pallet featured more routine- and uniformly-red, white, and blue than the Jets' outfits. As a result, the Sharks read as traditionally American; a subtle nod, perhaps, to Bernstein's implication that the Shark's are as equally "American" as the Jets. Each of these production elements smoothly contributed its own layer to the storytelling.

It would be irresponsible to watch and comment on the show without addressing the controversy swirling around this campus. It was indeed uncomfortable to watch actors who are not Puerto Rican portray characters who the director chose to leave as Puerto Rican — rather than have the characters adopt the ethnicity of their performers, as was the case with other Sharks. For those with closer ties than I to the identities portrayed in the show, I'm sure it was more than uncomfortable. This decision is a shame, and, given the makeup of the cast, not one that could be avoided without the complete erasure of the Puerto-Rican identity from the show or a severe overhaul of the script — either of which would present an equally knotted set of artistic implications, copyright issues, and questions of identity for our campus.

The worst we could do, as audience members or a campus, is to watch the show and avoid speaking about these uncomfortable truths, thereby failing to take advantage of the space provided for us to discuss issues of citizenship, xenophobia, race, and what it means to be American.

West Side Story is not a perfect show — it features some seriously reductive lyrics about Puerto Rico, labeling it an "ugly island of tropic disease," for instance — and this was not a perfect production. We need to talk about how it excelled, where and why it fell short, and go forward with both in mind — moving towards a department, and campus, which aim to artfully push boundaries, spark conversation, and change minds using an integrity befitting all those who call Hamilton home.

PHOTO COURTESTY OF NANCY FORD

***West Side Story*, this semester's mainstage production, is directed by Mark Cryer and premiered in Wellin Hall on April 19.**

PHOTO COURTESTY OF NANCY FORD

From left to right: Gus Gonzalez '21, Zeke Coleman '22, Jay Menner '22, Adrian Summers '19, Rachel Lee '22, and Man Nguyen '22 perform.

PHOTO COURTESTY OF NANCY FORD

From left to right: Danielle Hirsch '21, Lupita Cabanillas '21, Ndanu Mutisya '21, and Gus Gonzalez '21 belt one of the show's many classic songs.

B. Aull and Maine's emerging hip-hop scene

by Garret Lualdi '22
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Apr. 20, I met with hip hop/rap artist B. Aull a few hours before he opened the VIBES-sponsored hip-hop concert. His laid-back attitude, matched by an honest excitement for the upcoming show, was immediately noticeable, but not necessarily a surprise for those who have had a chance to listen to any of Aull's music. "You hear it and you just feel good" is how B. Aull described his sound, and it's easy to see where that feel-good energy comes from — he has no shortage of it.

Based out of Portland, ME, B. Aull has a strong awareness of his roots and how they have influenced his music. "There's a certain humbleness that comes with being from [Maine]," Aull said, explaining that when he "first started making music 8 years ago, [the hip-hop scene] was pretty nonexistent."

He described how he's had to work hard to promote his music, facing the competition of advantages inherent to artists coming from New York or Los Angeles. "Being from Maine, you've got to find a way to make yourself stand out, because people are like, 'Oh Maine has a hip-hop scene? Really? What's that like?'" Aull was candid about the pros and cons of making a name for himself out of Portland, however, noting that while coming from Maine has meant "missing out on connections and opportunities," it has also meant that he has been able to "be a big fish in a small pond."

While B. Aull draws on "a lot of people" as influences for his music, he named J. Cole as his number one influence. "J. Cole is one for me that always stands out [...] Just because I saw him perform in Portland back in 2010, 2011, before he was super poppin', and that's kind of what made me want to start making music." Other artists that inspire Aull include Kendrick Lamar, Kanye West ("mostly old Kanye,") GoldLink, and Anderson .Paak. He said he's come to the conclusion that "there are too many good artists out right now – it's crazy."

Our conversation then shifted to the hip-hop community as a whole, and I asked him about his thoughts on the polarizing nature of hip-hop today, despite its growing popularity. In an industry where old-school advocates are increasingly pitted against new-wave artists, Aull placed himself in the middle of the two communities. "I mean, I grew up on 90's, golden-age hip-hop, so I love lyricism, but at the same time, I love melodic stuff, and I love a lot of the new-age artists that are coming out with a different flavor, stuff you haven't seen [...] So I understand why its polarizing, but at the same time, hip-hop is a young genre still, it's only 40-something years old, if that, so you're going to see a lot of changes, a lot of sub-genres coming off of it, and I think people just have got to accept that and make the best of it."

Here, he referenced the recent viral rapper Lil Nas X and his country infused hip-hop single, "Old Town Road." Aull had some words of wisdom for those who may not always appreciate the newer generation of hip-hop artists that are pushing the genre in new and uncharted directions. "Find the good ones and rock with it. If you don't like an artist, just don't. You don't need to talk shit about it, just keep it moving."

As much as the evolution of the hip-hop genre may be contentious, what is not in question is Aull's own evolution as a musician and performer. He reflected that up until this past year, his style varied greatly from the artist he is today. "Most of my music career up until about a year, a year and a half ago was, like I said I love 90's hip-hop, all bars, bars, bars," Aull told me. "But over the past year I've started to sing more, incorporate more melody, more bouncy elements, because that's the stuff that I like."

PHOTO COURTESY OF GENIUS.COM

B. Aull, along with M. Ricio Matt, opened for Messy Tye at a hip-hop concert in the Annex on April 20.

In a way, he said, this year has served as an "on-the-fly re-brand" for his career, a transition year for the musician, where he has been "making more stuff that I like and more stuff that has that bounce."

B. Aull's latest single, "Not for Nothing," released on Feb. 22, is a strong example of Aull moving in a new creative direction, and is likely not the last we will hear from him. Careful to keep things under wraps, he told me that he was gearing up to release an EP sometime in the near future, possibly this summer.

"I haven't put out a project in a few years now, and this will be the first project I've put out since I've been rebranded essentially, in this new era," he said.

Aside from the coming EP, Aull assured that there would be plenty more to come during the second half of the year, from music videos to more shows. With his future looking bright, B. Aull said it best: "The rest of this year's going to be dope."

Hamilton College presents dozens of arts events each semester. Here are some upcoming events, plays, concerts, and recitals to look forward to from student performers, faculty performers, and outside groups!

by Josie Blatt '21 and Emma Mae Regan '22
A&E Editors

West Side Story
Thursday, April 25 and Friday, April 26, at 7:30 PM, and Saturday April 27 at 2:00 PM in Wellin Hall.

Hamilton's spring main stage production combines the best of the theatre and music departments. Directed by Mark Cryer, this adaptation of the classic American musical is set in The Bronx, New York in 2018, one year after Hurricaine Maria.

Masterworks Chorale with Choir and Symphoria
Tuesday, April 30 in Wellin Hall at 7:30 PM

Masterworks Chorale and the Hamilton College Choir combine for one night to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Walt Whitman's birth. They will sing three settings of Whitman's texts by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Book Release and Reading with Author Kyandreia Jones '19
Wednesday, May 1 in Burke Library 7:00 PM

Jones '19 will share her new book Spies: James Armistead Lafayette, which is part of the Chooesco publishing company's "Choose Your Own Adventure" series.

Hamilton College Orchestra Concert
Friday, May 3 in Wellin Hall at 7:30 PM

Heather Buchman conducts the Hamilton College Orchestra through a program including Brahms's Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90 and Griffes's Poem for Flute and Orchestra, with Edwin Brennan, flute.

Hamilton College Jazz Ensemble Performance
Tuesday, May 7 in Cafe Opus 1 at 7:30 PM

Join the Hamilton College Jazz Ensemble, led by "Doc" Woods, in their final concert of the semester.

College Hill Singers Spring Recital Wednesday, May 8 in Wellin Hall at 7:30 PM

Support the College Hill Singers, a subset of the Hamilton College choir, as they sing Randall Thompson's settings of Robert Frost Poetry.

Class & Charter Day Concert
Friday, May 10 at 3:30 PM

Electronic Dance DJ Duo Galantis will headline the annual CAB concert. Galantis is known for their hit singles "Runaway (U & I)" and "Peanut Butter Jelly." Pop Singer ROZES and student band Juice will open for Galantis.

Student Soloists Concert
Saturday, May 11 in Wellin Hall at 6:00 PM

Hamilton students display their hard work from this semester's instrumental and vocal lessons.

Email specarts@hamilton.edu to get an event advertised

In photos: men's lacrosse wraps up best season since 2014

Hamilton's first game of the season was a 20-11 loss against #5 Tufts, but Chris Conley '20 netted four points for a strong offensive start.

The next matchup, this time against Colby, was an explosive 17-9 victory for the Continentals for their first NESCAC win since 2017.

At the 9th annual Contineer Cup, the Continentals dominated Utica College in a 6-1 final win on March 11.

The team raised awareness and funds for local children with cancer, teaming up with the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.

On March 20, the Continentals racked up a whopping 17 points against the Nazareth College Golden Flyers.

The Continentals faced a short setback mid-season accumulating a series of losses against several NESCAC rivals.

PHOTOS BY JOSH MCKEE

Finishing the end of the season strong, Hamilton defeated Vassar on April 17, with a final score of 15-12.

The season finale, on April 23, ended in a 19-6 win against Hartwick College, leaving Hamilton undefeated in non-conference ga

Pfeiffer '19, Sutor '20, and Buckley '21 reflect on careers and rowing season

*from **Rowing**, page 16*

Pfeiffer: In high school I played several sports that I planned on pursuing in college but was unlucky and came down with two shoulder injuries, which required surgery. When I came to Hamilton I still wanted to be a part of a team, but since I could no longer play those sports, I wasn't sure what I could do. Up until that point, I had always used the erg as a way to build fitness for other sports, and I could pull some pretty decent times. I was living with Grant, the other men's team captain, and we both decided to join the team, and the rest is history.

Spectator: How has being a part of the crew team changed or defined your Hamilton experience?

Pfeiffer: I'm not necessarily sure how it has changed my experience, because I have been on the team over the entirety of my time at Hamilton. With that said, it has definitely had a really positive impact on my time here. For one, all of my best friends are on the team. The fact that I get to spend nearly all of my time with them is really great. Additionally, I think my time on the team has helped my develop both as an athlete and as a student.

Sutor: Being on the rowing team is truly my favorite part of my Hamilton experience. The support group is unparalleled. We are an open and accepting group of men and women. To be on a collegiate varsity team requires a lot of time management skills. I am happy to have learned these skills before leaving Hamilton.

Buckley: I was a recruit for rowing, so when I was envisioning myself in college, I was seeing myself as a student-athlete. Like any club or team, most of your friends are on your team. I've met some amazing people, and some of my closest friends are on the team and it's given me a lot of structure. When I came to college at first, I wasn't used to the openness of my day, so rowing gave me structure that was so important during the transition to college life.

Spectator: Kat [Buckley], What goals do you have for yourself and for the team in the next two years?

Buckley: I want to get as fast as I can, obviously, and I want to continue to improve while I'm abroad. For the team, I really want to see us go to the NCAA Championships. We'd have to win the NESCACs or get an at-large bid, which is probably our best shot. We've been close in the past and the last time we went was in 2015. Everyone wants to go to Nationals, but I think that in the coming years we have a good shot.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE ROWING

Trent Pfeiffer '19 (second from right in red hat) raced against his former school, St. Lawrence, to win the Gilman and Houlihan Cups.

Spectator: What advice would you have for First Years as you look back on your three years at Hamilton?

Sutor: Your experience will be what you make of it. The most successful people that I see at Hamilton are the ones who give 100% of themselves to what they love to do.

Pfeiffer: My advice would be to take advantage of being a part of such a tight-knit team for the next three years. I have developed amazing friendships which are the result of all the time spent with my teammates. Spending every hour of the day with your best friends is something that can only really happen in college. Try to make the most of it while you can.

Men's and women's rowing will return home to the Erie Canal this Saturday, April 27, at 11:40 AM.

Softball starts season 25-8, posts best record since entering NESCAC in 2001

*from **Softball**, page 16*

and it helped add some comfort and stability for the team."

Emily Seidel was hired as the new assistant coach this past January after coaching one season at Los Angeles Mission College. Searcy recognized Coach Seidel's work specifically with the team's pitchers as significant to their improvement this season as well.

The team also welcomed seven new first-years, who have all made a notable impact so far. Pitcher Morgan Hartranft '22 has the most pitching appearances on the team with 23. Hartranft's 11 wins while pitching this season are tied for the most in the NESCAC, and she leads the conference with 5 saves. Her performance has earned her NESCAC Pitcher of the Week honors twice during her first season.

Searcy says of the first-years: "Having seven first years is amazing [...] We are fortunate that they play all different positions, which means they are able to cover a range of significance on the field. I have confidence in every single one of them."

Perhaps most important to the team's advancement this season is their attitude and incredible dedication to the sport, which have been very evident to spectators of their games. Searcy explained, "We all come out with a 'team' mentality and confidence. We are so lucky to have such a large and strong roster this year and we have confidence in everyone who steps out onto the field.

"I am proud to say that every person wants to win and keeps fighting, no matter the score. And thankfully, in most sports, if you have that kind of mentality and drive to win, anything is possible — and I think we have found that this season."

The team looks to build on their success going into their last two doubleheaders of the season and into the postseason; their last regular season home games are Wednesday, May 1 against SUNY Polytechnic at 4:00 PM and at 6:00 PM in Hamilton's Loop Road Baseball/Softball Complex.

PHOTO BY JOSH MCKEE

In the second Middlebury match-up, Emily Fraser '20 broke her own program record with 32 RBIs.

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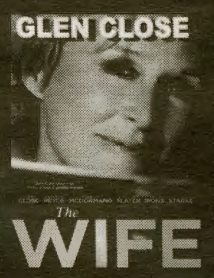

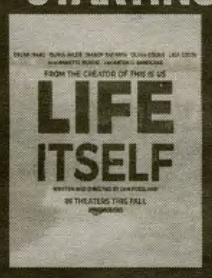

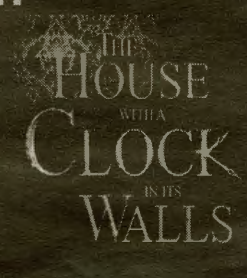

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H SPECTATOR SPORTS
April 25, 2019

Softball breaks three records while recording most wins in program history

by Jo Dine '22
Staff Writer

The Hamilton softball team (25-8 overall, 7-5 NESCAC) continued building momentum within their already-outstanding season by breaking multiple program records during their three-game series win over Middlebury College (12-14 overall, 4-5 NESCAC) on Friday, Apr. 19 and Saturday, Apr. 20. They won the first two games against Middlebury, the first with a score of 8-7 and the second 18-6 in only five innings. The Panthers took the last game on Saturday with a score of 6-4.

In the Friday game, the Continentals had an 8-0 lead for four innings and were able to persist despite an unanswered 7-run stretch by Middlebury late in the game. Emily Fraser '20 and Helen Lin '19 both had two runs batted in, and Caitlin Berreitter '20, Kendall Searcy '20, and Liz Brautigam '19 each had one. Victoria Dunn '22 had one stolen base; she is currently ranked fourth in the NESCAC in stolen bases.

In the first inning of the second Middlebury game, Fraser had her 32nd run batted in, which broke her own program record for RBIs in a season. Fraser leads the team with a batting average of .457 (second highest in the NESCAC) and is slugging .638. Shortly after, Searcy hit a single, marking the program record for highest number of hits in one season at 301. The third consecutive hit in the inning was a triple from Lin, creating yet another program record of 17 triples on the season. By the end of the thrilling game, Lin had scored three runs and Caroline Chivily '19 and Searcy had two runs batted in.

This has clearly been a historic season for the softball program, who have never had an overall winning record, dating back to their first year in the NESCAC in 2001, let alone a record of 25-8 with four games still remaining. Last season, the team went 11-22 overall (2-10 NESCAC.) Junior infielder Searcy credited the coaching staff changes, the depth of the roster, the first-year player additions, and the team's overall mentality for their unprecedented success.

In Sept. 2018, Hamilton's assistant coach of two years, Stephanie Hartquist, was promoted to head coach. Searcy says, "Especially for the returners, it was really nice to have Coach H. come in as the head coach because she had been our assistant

*see **Softball**, page 13*

PHOTO BY JOSH MCKEE

Helen Lin '19 broke the program record for triples in a season, hitting her 17th triple in the second game against Middlebury.

Keeping up with the crew team: sitting down with Hamilton's standout rowers

by Grace Myers '19
Sports Editor

Men's and women's rowing completed a competitive weekend with both teams finishing in first place on Saturday, Apr. 20 on the Erie Canal. The men and women both raced against St. Lawrence, Vassar, Union, and the University of Rochester.

This competition, the second-to-last home regatta of the semester, saw first-place efforts from all four men's boats, with the Gilman and Houlihan Cups going to the Continentals' varsity-8 boats. The women's first and second varsity-8 boats won the Gilman Plate and Goblet as well as the Women's V8 Cup.

The teams' last home regattas will be this weekend against some tougher competition. As the teams gear up for this race and the home stretch of the season, *The Spectator* sat down with three rowers: Trent Pfeiffer '19, a captain on the men's first varsity-8 boat; Rachel Sutor '20, a coxswain on the women's first varsity-8 boat; and Kat Buckley '21, a rower on the women's varsity-8 boat. Pfeiffer, Sutor, and Buckey all gave their thoughts on the season, their journey in the sport of rowing, and the prospects for the rest of their seasons.

Spectator: First of all, congratulations on the wins last weekend! How did you prepare for and celebrate the weekend?

Buckley: To start with, there are a lot of meters on the canal and in terms of mental preparation, we have a pre-race routine that varies by boat. Personally, I listen to a lot of hype music and do a lot of visualization of the race and its possible scenarios. This coming weekend is really important for us, so it's nice to keep the trophies we received, but we're definitely looking toward this weekend. We are racing Ithaca, which for men and women is a big competition. We're always really close in times so it'll be a much more competitive race.

Sutor: Before any race I like to mentally work though all of the possible outcomes so I am prepared for whatever situation we encounter. I also listen to recordings of national champion coxswains so I can hear what the best are doing and try to implement aspects of that into our race plan. As the coxswain part of my job is limiting the stress and mental work for the rowers. If they know I am prepared, they will have a better race.

Pfeiffer: Thank you! For preparation, I would say there is a long-term and short-term approach. In the long term, the focus is on fitness, which is a process that starts as soon as the fall season ends. It includes countless hours on the erg (rowing machine) and lifting in the weight room. In the short term, the goal is to work on technique on the water and get in the right mindset so we feel confident as we enter a race. As for celebrating, it usually just includes having a fun time with friends, and occasionally going out to get some food with family if they are in town.

Spectator: How did you start rowing?

Buckley: I did cross country for a couple of years in high school, and my brother had just started rowing and said I might like it. I decided to join, and ended up doing an extra year of high school at a boarding school partially to keep rowing. Now here I am!

Sutor: I started out as a rower my freshman year of high school. Since I am on the smaller side for rowers, when I got to college I decided that I would bring experience behind the oar into the cox seat. The rest is history!

*see **Rowing**, page 13*

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE ROWING

Rachel Sutor '20 (center) and her varsity-eight boat took home 3 trophies this weekend, beating second-place Union by a whopping 20 se